INCOMING AIRGRAM

Department of State

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Date Sent: March 29, 1961
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
5:44 p.m.

REVIEWED BY D. ZACHARY DATE 2/15/83

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FROM: Amembassy BRUSSELS

TO: Secretary of State

NO: G-282

RPTD INFO: Amembassy PARIS G-111

Dept G-77.

No official announcement has been made to date by the Belgian Govt concerning the cause of the February 15 crash of a Sabena Boeing jet aircraft. The Embassy has been besieged, however, by a series of requests for information which tend to infer that sabotage, a demented passenger, pilot error, or mechanical malfunction may all have been responsible for the disaster.

Sabena itself has now signed an agreement with Boeing for two more 707 jet aircraft, testifying to the faith that the Belgian airline has in the soundness of the American plane. The Boeing special representatives themselves, after approximately two weeks of investigation on the spot, have returned to Seattle to run flight tests of aircraft of the same specifications to attempt to simulate some of the conditions which may have been present at the time of the crash, with a view to discovering what might have caused the accident.

The Embassy believes that any speculation on causes of the crash by news media would not be helpful at this time, as Sabena, the Belgian investigators, Boeing technicians and other experts are in process of establishing the true (or most probable) causes of the accident.

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In that respect, it is believed that an autopsy may have been made by Belgian medical personnel on the crew of the ill fated Boeing. Results of this autopsy are held secure by Belgian investigatory authorities, and have not been released. (The Embassy will endeavor to ascertain the results of the autopsy for U.S. Government use.)

[redacted]

• This copy must be returned to RMR Central [redacted]

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with Embassy memorandum, CAB Transmittal Slip and envelope

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#563 PARA (6)(5)

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ACTION REQUESTED:

Belgian authorities have expressed great interest in obtaining US aid for thorough pathological examination of flight-crew personnel in the event of another Sabena crash. In the interest of international flight safety, the Embassy would prefer that no information relating to pathological examinations, or lack thereof, be released through US Government sources to the US press, as it may prejudice future efforts to insure that such examinations are conducted with the aid of qualified US personnel.

FREEMAN

APR 3 1961

POL:CASquire:mjr
3/28/61

Retyped in DC/T
April 2, 1961 by lrr.

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